

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BONN 01289 231839Z

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAJ-01 IO-11 ACDA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00

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R 231828Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5928

INFO AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMCONSUL HAMBURG

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

USMISSION USBERLIN

C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 01289

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, GW

SUBJECT: SPD CHAIRMAN BRANDT ON THE POLITICAL SITUATION
IN LAND NIEDERSACHSEN

1. DURING MY DISCUSSION TODAY WITH SPD CHAIRMAN BRANDT, LARGELY DEVOTED TO OTHER SUBJECTS, HE EXPRESSED HIS CONTINUING MYSTIFICATION OVER THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN LAND NIEDERSACHSEN. IT WAS STILL LARGELY UNCLEAR TO THE SPD LEADERSHIP HOW THE FALL OF THE SPD/FDP GOVERNMENT HAD COME ABOUT. HE DID NOT BELIEVE IT WAS PRIMARILY A QUESTION OF THE PERSONAL QUALITIES OF THE REJECTED SPD MINISTER PRESIDENT CANDIDATE KASIMIER, OR, FOR THAT MATTER, THE RATHER SILLY ATTEMPTS TO RE-DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE AREAS IN NIEDERSACHSEN. A MORE LIKELY FACTOR WAS THE WORKING OUT OF SOME VERY OLD FEUDS, BUT THIS WAS ONLY CONJECTURE. THERE HAD NEVER BEEN ANY DOUBT ABOUT THE OPPOSITION OF CERTAIN SPD AND FDP LANDTAG MEMBERS TO THE RE-DISTRICTING PRO-
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PAGE 02 BONN 01289 231839Z

POSALS, ACCORDING TO BRANDT. AT LEAST FOUR SPD MEM-

BERS OF THE LANDTAG HAD SAID THEY WOULD VOTE AGAINST RE-DISTRICTING LEGISLATION. BUT THIS WAS QUITE DIFFERENT FROM OUT-AND-OUT DEFECTION ON A VOTE FOR A NEW MINISTER PRESIDENT.

2. THE CDU MINISTER PRESIDENT ELECT ALBRECHT WAS NOW FACED WITH SOME HARD DECISIONS, BRANDT CONTINUED. HE SUSPECTED THAT ALBRECHT WOULD NOT ATTEMPT TO PUT FORWARD A CABINET AND OBTAIN APPROVAL WITHIN THE TWENTY-ONE DAYS STIPULATED BY THE LANDTAG CONSTITUTION UNLESS HE WERE ABSOLUTELY SURE THAT ONE OF THE DEFECTING LANDTAG MEMBERS (EITHER THE ONE WHO VOTED AGAINST KASIMIER OR ONE OF THE THREE WHO HAD CAST INVALID BALLOTS) WAS PREPARED TO DISCLOSE HIMSELF AND VOTE OPENLY IN FAVOR OF THE CDU CANDIDATE. IF HE WERE NOT CERTAIN, ALBRECHT MIGHT INSTEAD DECIDE TO LET THE 21-DAY PERIOD AND THE SUBSEQUENT 14-DAY PERIOD EXPIRE, HOPING THAT AN SPD/FDP ATTEMPT TO DISSOLVE THE LANDTAG AND BRING ABOUT AN ELECTION WOULD LIKEWISE FAIL TO OBTAIN THE REQUIRED MAJORITY. THEREAFTER ALBRECHT COULD CONTINUE AS MINISTER PRESIDENT AS HEAD OF A MINORITY GOVERNMENT.

3. IT WAS TOO BAD THAT FORMER MINISTER PRESIDENT KUBEL HAD BEEN SO STUBBORN ABOUT RETIRING IN JANUARY, BRANDT OBSERVED. THE ADVICE FROM THE PARTY LEADERSHIP IN BONN WAS ALL TO THE CONTRARY, AND CERTAINLY KUBEL WOULD NOT HAVE RESIGNED HAD HE KNOWN WHAT WAS GOING TO HAPPEN. THE CHANCES OF GETTING HIM TO COME BACK INTO ACTIVE POLITICAL LIFE TO SAVE THE SITUATION IN NIEDER-SACHSEN, ACCORDING TO BRANDT, WERE NOT VERY GOOD AT THIS POINT.
HILLENBRAND

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